

Tennessee Higher  
Education Commission



Request for Proposals  
and  
Guidelines for Submission

# **Institutional Grant Competition:** ***Tennessee Promise Forward***



Notice of Intent Deadline: June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Proposal Deadline: July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Request for Proposals**

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## **1.     *Background***

Since 2010, Tennessee has been pursuing a higher education completion agenda focused on significantly increasing educational attainment among all Tennesseans. In order to reach its completion goals, the state must fundamentally change how it approaches higher education attainment and measures progress. To this end, Tennessee is taking decisive action to increase educational attainment among Tennesseans through reform legislation such as the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 (CCTA) and Governor Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiative. The state's education climate is ripe for significant education gains.

Tennessee took ambitious and comprehensive action toward furthering the state's completion agenda with the passage of the CCTA in 2010, establishing a direct link between the state's economic development and its education systems and effectively recognizing educational attainment as the state's primary need relative to higher education. In 2013, Tennessee's broad reform efforts were further strengthened by the launch of Governor Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 campaign – a comprehensive set of programs, policies, and initiatives that aim to increase the percentage of Tennesseans with a degree or credential from 32 percent to 55 percent by the year 2025. By making educational attainment his top priority, Governor Haslam has challenged higher education to revisit traditional processes, seek new approaches, and develop student-centered pathways in order to meet the 55 percent attainment goal.

## **II.     *Overview***

The focus of this request for proposals will be to retain and graduate Tennessee Promise students through the design and implementation of scalable programs and services based at Tennessee's community colleges.

The aim of the Tennessee Promise Forward initiative (hereafter, Promise Forward) is to support postsecondary retention and completion of Tennessee Promise students through competitive grants to Tennessee community colleges. Promise Forward was originally established in 2015 through a federal College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) which funded grants at seven community colleges.

The current grant competition is funded through an \$800,000 non-recurring allocation included in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2017 budget. THEC anticipates awarding approximately 5-7 grants with a maximum award of \$160,000. Grants will be approximately 20 months in length beginning September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 lasting through June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

### **III. Grant Details**

#### **A. Eligibility**

Applicants will be considered eligible for the Promise Forward grant with the following conditions:

- A Tennessee public community college must serve as the applicant and fiscal agent.
- Projects must serve all Tennessee Promise students enrolled at the institution, regardless of whether students actually received Tennessee Promise funds. For example, a student who received a full Pell award but met the all Tennessee Promise requirements must receive grant services.
- Projects must fall into one of the following categories, detailed in section III - D:
  - Early interventions and proactive advising
  - Technology and digital outreach
  - Robust student support services
- A letter of support from the institution's local Tennessee Promise partnering organization is highly encouraged but not required.

#### **B. Timeline**

In order to answer questions and provide further information regarding Tennessee Promise Forward grant goals and application, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) will provide a webinar for institutions at 2pm CDT on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Participation in the webinar is not required to be eligible for the grant. The webinar details and registration are posted on THEC's website (<http://tn.gov/thec/article/promise-forward>).

Institutions must submit a statement of their intent to apply for a Tennessee Promise Forward grant by June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Final proposals are due by 4:30pm CDT on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Deadlines for the Tennessee Promise Forward grant are as follows:

<b>Tennessee Promise Forward Grant Timeline</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>
THEC releases Promise Forward RFP	6/15/2016
Technical assistance webinar for institutions	6/22/2016 at 2pm CDT
Deadline to submit a Notice of Intent	6/27/2016 at 4:30pm CDT
Proposals due to THEC from institutions	7/11/2016 at 4:30pm CDT
THEC announces grant award	8/15/2016
Mandatory project director webinar	September, 2016
Grant activities begin	9/15/2016
Grant activities conclude	6/1/2018

### C. Award Amount and Duration

The current grant competition is funded through an \$800,000 non-recurring allocation included in the Governor's FY17 budget. THEC anticipates awarding approximately 5-7 grants with a maximum award of \$160,000. Grants will be approximately 20 months in length beginning September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 lasting through June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Any awarded grants are subject to the appropriation and availability of State funds. In the event that the funds are not appropriated or are otherwise unavailable, THEC reserves the right to terminate this initiative upon written notice to the institution.

### D. Project Categories

Proposed projects and expenditures must focus on providing student-focused services in one of the following categories:

- Early interventions and proactive advising: Projects in this category must use early warning indicators to deliver needed interventions through an intrusive, relationship-based advising model. Outreach may be conducted by advisors, a Promise Forward completion specialist, faculty, and other qualified individuals. Research base: Research on postsecondary attrition indicates that drop out is not an isolated event but a complex process. Low income students in particular often lack the cultural knowledge to successfully navigate the higher education arena (Braxton, J. 2000). A relationship with a caring individual is not only a helpful resource, but also a check point to identify and help address challenges that may lead a student to drop out.
- Technology and digital outreach: Projects in this category combine advising efforts with technology to better serve students. Seemingly small, inconsequential details can derail a student's chance of success, especially among low-income students. Projects in this category would not only use technology to provide Tennessee Promise students with key information regarding scholarship and institutional deadlines, but also to provide them with a vehicle to ask questions and receive timely feedback. Research base: Well-timed "nudges" have led to dramatic decreases in summer melt, the phenomenon of students who intend to go to college but do not go on to enroll, during the summer following high school graduation (Castleman, Page, & Snowdon, 2013). Text messages intended to influence student behavior patterns are promising, low-cost ways to retain and graduate students. Applicants are not limited to the above example and may draw upon other research supporting the use of technology-based interventions in the design of a proposed project.
- Robust student support services: Projects in this category may incorporate aspects of technology-based and personal advising models into a combined project plan. Projects may also integrate strategies such as cohort models, student support centers, and first year experiences to create a holistic retention model. Applicants must cite relevant research supporting the efficacy of the proposed project.

Research base: A student's successful acclimation to college – both socially and academically – is key to persistence and completion (Braxton, Hirschy, & McLendon, 2004). Students who do not feel at home within their institution or do not believe that an institution can help them meet their goals are less likely to persist. Fostering a student's sense of attachment at community colleges in particular, where students are non-residential, is key for Tennessee Promise students.

#### **E. Notice of Intent**

THEC requires institutions to send letters of intent to indicate plans to submit a grant proposal. The letter should identify a campus liaison with whom THEC will communicate throughout the application process and must include the signature of the college president.

Letters are due from institutions to THEC via email to Melinda Dunn at [Melinda.Dunn@tn.gov](mailto:Melinda.Dunn@tn.gov) by 4:30pm CDT on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The subject line must read "Tennessee Promise Forward" with the institution's name.

#### **F. Submission of Grant Application**

The grant proposal submission deadline is July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 4:30pm CDT. Submissions should be emailed to Melinda Dunn at [Melinda.Dunn@tn.gov](mailto:Melinda.Dunn@tn.gov). Proposals should be no longer than 15 pages for institutions who have not previously administered a Promise Forward grant and no longer than 16 pages for institutions who have implemented a prior Promise Forward grant. The page limit excludes the project abstract, timeline, budget items, letters of commitment, and any applicable curriculum vitae. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

#### **G. THEC Monitoring Policies and Grant Reporting**

To measure the success of the proposed projects, THEC will require grantees to participate in quarterly monitoring calls and complete monitoring documents prior to each call. Monitoring documents will include the status of each milestone listed in the project timeline and a written narrative. Grantees will also be required to submit two performance reports containing data and narrative information detailing the project's implementation. Performance reports will be due in June, 2017 and within 30 days of the project's conclusion. Final grant reimbursements will not be made until the final performance report is received.

#### **H. Sustainability and Scalability**

Projects should consider that, if successful, interventions have the potential to adapt in a feasible and cost effective manner to serve the diverse student body that make up Tennessee's community colleges. While Tennessee Promise students represent

traditional age students, proposals should describe how the plan may be expanded or adapted to serve the entire community college population, such as non-traditional and adult learners. Proposals should include relevant research or promising practice.

### **III. Proposal Components**

#### **A. Cover Page**

Applicants must complete the Promise Forward proposal packet's cover page and include all required signatures (Appendix E). Applicants must designate a project manager and a primary contact during the application process (these can be the same individual) to report to THEC. Applicants should identify the contact(s) by listing first and last name, title, and contact information on the cover page.

#### **B. Section 1: Project Abstract**

Applicants should include a project summary/abstract no longer than half a page. This will be used to describe funded proposals in publications and on THEC's website. Note: The project abstract does not count toward the page limit.

#### **C. Section 2: Project Proposal**

Proposals must include a detailed description of the project and the proposed activities. Project descriptions should provide:

1. An overview of the campus student body, including enrollment status breakdown of students, i.e., percent of students who are first-time full-time, etc. Include specific details of the anticipated Tennessee Promise cohort to be served, including projected headcount.
2. A description of the proposed project, the associated activities, and the rationale for choosing said approach, including relevant research. The narrative should address how the proposed project addresses the unique needs of Tennessee Promise students.
3. A description of how the proposed project will serve all Tennessee Promise students on campus.
4. A description of anticipated outcomes in terms of impacts on student access, retention and completion, and internal functions.

#### **D. Section 3: Timeline**

Proposals must include a detailed timeline outlining all key grant activities, milestones, and anticipated deliverables. A template is provided in the application packet.

#### **E. Section 4: Implementation of a Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grant**

Applicants who received funding in the previous Tennessee Promise Forward grant competition must describe how the grant was implemented and how a new grant will contribute to and expand upon prior initiatives. Specifically, include the following:

1. A brief description of the project and how it was implemented.
2. A description of the project's outcomes.
3. A description of how the project proposed in this competition will support or enhance outcomes from the prior grant award.

Note: if applicants have not received prior Tennessee Promise Forward funding, skip this question.

## **F. Section 5: Organizational Capacity**

Proposals must include an overview of the applying institution's capacity to successfully carry out the proposed project and the resources available to support grant implementation. Applicants should provide:

1. List of individuals responsible for managing, coordinating or carrying out activities and their associated responsibilities. Include curriculum vitae for the project director and any key personnel responsible for project implementation.
2. If the project includes internal collaboration across institutional departments and offices, the proposal must provide a brief summary of the internal collaboration and signed letters of collaboration from the internal partners.
3. If the project includes external collaboration with another institution, Tennessee Promise partner organization, or other not-for profit organization, the proposal must provide a brief summary of the external collaboration and signed letters of collaboration from the external partners. A letter of support from the local Tennessee Promise partner organization is highly encouraged but not required.

*Note: Letters of commitment to collaboration and curriculum vitae do not count toward the page limit. These items should be provided as an appendix at the end of the grant proposal.*

## **G. Section 6: Project Goals and Evaluation**

Proposals must address to what extent the proposed interventions will support the goal of increased retention among Tennessee Promise students. This section should



also address how the proposed project fits into the institution's larger strategic plan to improve student outcomes.

Proposals must provide an evaluation plan which includes the following:

1. Baseline data and stated targets for project performance measures. A table is provided in the Project Goals and Evaluation portion of the application packet which must be completed. Proposed projects are not required to address each measure, but data will be collected on each measure through the required reporting. Baseline data must include either the prior class of Tennessee Promise students or the most recent class of first-time full-time students, specifying the population chosen and the rationale. Additionally, applicants may choose to include additional performance measures.
2. Description of how desired outcomes and targets were established using baseline data and project goals.
3. Description of how the project evaluation will be implemented, including how grantees intend to collect, analyze, and report required data. Include a description of the personnel responsible for these tasks.
4. Description of how student data will be used to monitor student academic progress and drive appropriate interventions.

## **H. Section 7: Sustainability**

Applicants will provide a detailed explanation of how the proposed interventions will be sustained beyond the life of the grant. The sustainability plan should describe how the institution plans to continue the work initially funded by the Tennessee Promise Forward grant and how the institution plans to adjust, in terms of institutional capacity, personnel, dedicated funding and/or other resources that will be brought to bear in order to support Tennessee Promise students after the conclusion of the grant.

## **I. Section 8: Project Budget**

All proposed budget items should directly link to the delivery of student services. Both a Project Budget Summary Form, including the line-item detail, and a written narrative for each budget line item is required. Funds *may not be used to supplant* existing programs. A description of each line item is included in Appendix D. Please note specific requirements for the following budget categories:

Salaries and Benefits – All salary and benefit expenditures must be linked to project services; therefore, each salary draw down must reflect the real time contributions of personnel on the project. ***Institutions are required to provide 50 percent of all salary and benefit expenditures.*** For example, if a part-time completion coach makes \$50,000 in salaries and fringe benefits, \$25,000 may come from the grant and \$25,000 must be matched by the institution. For calculating fringe benefits, use your institution's current

rate. This is only applicable to salaried employees. Please note that stipends for faculty advisors, peer coaches, etc. should be located in the Professional Fees line item and do not require the 50 percent match.

*Note: The institution match does not count towards the total award amount.*

Food Expenditure –Grant funds may not be used for food unless doing so is necessary to accomplish legitimate meeting, event or conference business. Food expenditures may be allowable at an event, provided attendance during meal time is needed to ensure full participation to achieve project goals.

Participant tuition and fees – Grant funds may not pay for tuition and fees.

Indirect Costs – Grant proposals should use the applying institution's indirect cost rate not to exceed 8 percent.

*Note: The Project Budget Summary Form and corresponding budget narrative do not count toward the page limit.*

## **J. Section 9: Budget Narrative**

Applicants will provide a budget narrative for each budget line-item. The budget narrative explains 1) the basis for estimating the costs of each line item and, 2) how major cost items relate to the proposed project activities. Budget forms and budget narrative must justify effective and efficient use of funds and describe the full range of resources needed to accomplish project goals.

Both the budget and budget narrative must align with the proposed project, size of the service area, number of students served, and resources needed to fully and successfully implement the program.

## **IV. Application Procedures**

### **A. Preparation of the Application**

The narrative sections of the proposal must have one inch margins, single spaced, and the font used must not be smaller than 11-point. This narrative portion of the application shall not exceed 15 pages for institutions who have not previously administered a Tennessee Promise Forward Grant. For institutions who previously received a Tennessee Promise Forward grant award, the application shall not exceed 16 pages. The project abstract, timeline, letters of support, curriculum vitae, and budget items do not count toward the page limit.

The proposal sections must be labeled and must be returned in order, as shown:

- Cover Page, signatures required
- Project Abstract
- Project Proposal
- Timeline
- Implementation of Prior Tennessee Promise Forward grant (if applicable)
- Organizational Capacity
- Project Goals and Evaluation
- Sustainability and Scalability
- Project Budget
- Budget Narrative
- Appendices: letters of support and curriculum vitae

## **B. Submission**

Applicants must submit a complete application packet with signatures electronically, located in Appendix E, to [Melinda.Dunn@tn.gov](mailto:Melinda.Dunn@tn.gov). To be considered for funding, proposals must be received by THEC no later than 4:30 pm CDT on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Incomplete applications will not be considered. An application checklist is included in the application packet.

## **C. Notification**

Notice will be sent to the project director listed on the grant proposal within two business days confirming receipt by THEC. It is the sole responsibility of the applying institution to verify receipt of the proposal.

## **D. Review Process**

Funding recommendations will be made by a grant review committee that will score proposals according to the guidelines in the scoring rubric. THEC will use the review committee's scores and recommendations as the primary consideration for funding and to form the basis for negotiation and final selection. Proposals will be funded based upon 1) review committee recommendations; 2) potential of the proposed project to increase student retention and completion according to research and promising practice; 3) feasibility of project cost relative to number of students served; and, 4) program sustainability and scalability.

Following award selection, THEC will contact the project director of the selected proposals to discuss any modifications to the project plan or budget that may be required before the grant is awarded. To maximize the impact of limited funds, applicants whose proposals are recommended for funding at less than the amount requested may be asked to revise the project budget and/or scope of work.

## ***V. Award Administration***

### **A. Award Conditions**

The amount of funding awarded to each institution may vary based on institutional size, number of students served, project activities, and resources needed to fully and successfully implement the project to better serve Tennessee Promise students. Awards are contingent upon THEC receiving funding from the State, availability of funds within the grant budget and upon THEC's evaluation of funded programs for compliance with project requirements and effectiveness of project implementation.

### **B. Grant Requirements**

Each contracted institution must report its progress in meeting performance measures identified in the grant proposal to THEC and participate in periodic monitoring calls. Further information regarding reporting requirements and forms will be provided by THEC after the grant is awarded.

## **Appendix A – Application Checklist**

### **Tennessee Promise Forward Grant Competition**

#### **Application Checklist**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
	<b>Potential applicants participate in webinar</b>	<b>June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016</b>
	<b>Applicants submit Letters of Intent to Participate</b>	<b>June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>
	<b>Completed Proposal due to THEC from Applicants</b>	<b>July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>
	<b>Receive Confirmation of Submission from THEC</b>	<b>July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>
	<b>Grant Awards Announced by THEC</b>	<b>August 15, 2016</b>

## Appendix B – Scoring Rubric: Institutions with Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grant

### Tennessee Promise Forward Grant

#### Reviewer Scoring Rubric

#### Institutions who Previously Implemented a Tennessee Promise Forward Grant

**Applying Institution** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Project Category** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Project Budget** \_\_\_\_\_

**Funding Recommendation (yes, no, yes with modifications)** \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Project Proposal: <i>Project Description</i></b>  Does the proposal clearly articulate how the project will increase postsecondary retention and completion of Tennessee Promise students?  -Does the proposed project design clearly fit within one of the three project categories? -Does the proposed project design reflect up-to-date research and/or effective practices?  - Will the project effectively serve all Tennessee Promise students on campus?  <u>Scoring Range</u> 30-Proposal includes a detailed description of the project, proposed interventions, and how the initiative will increase student retention and completion among <u>all</u> Tennessee Promise students. Project is supported by relevant research or promising practice. Project fits within one of the three proposal categories.  15-Proposal includes a description of the project and proposed interventions that clearly fit into one of the three proposal categories but may lack detail. The proposal does not clearly articulate how the intervention will lead to increased retention and completion <u>or</u> the project is not supported by relevant research/ practice.  1-The proposal is lacking key information about the proposed intervention and any relevant research. The project does not clearly fit within one of the three categories.	30		

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Project Proposal: <i>Implementation Timeline</i></b>  -Does the proposal include a detailed timeline for implementation?  -Is the proposed timeline feasible and likely to result in successful grant implementation and improved student outcomes?  <u>Scoring Range</u> 12-The proposal includes a detailed implementation timeline that includes key milestones, responsible parties, and anticipated outcomes.  6-The proposal includes a timeline but may lack sufficient detail.  1-It is unclear how the proposed project will be implemented based on the information provided.	12		
<b>Implementation of a Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grant</b>  - Was the prior project implemented efficiently, effectively, and according to plan?  - Did the grant achieve its intended outcomes?  - Will the proposed project draw upon the foundation established by and the success seen in the prior grant?  <u>Scoring Range</u> 15- The proposal includes a detailed description the previous project. The initiative achieved its desired outcomes and will be enhanced by the proposed project.  7-The proposal includes a detailed description of the previous project. It is unclear if the proposed project was will result in desired outcomes or if previous work will be improved by additional funding.  1- Effective implementation of the previous project is unclear. The project did not achieve its desired outcomes and will not be enhanced by additional funding.	15		

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>  -Do the qualifications of the project director/key personnel demonstrate skills needed to successfully carry out the proposed project?  -Does the applying institution commit the resources necessary for the project to be successful?  <u>Scoring Range</u> 10 -The institution's resources and key personnel have the capacity to successfully implement the proposed project.  5-The proposal lacks sufficient detail about the institution's resources or the project director's capacity to carry out the project.  1-The proposed leadership, partnerships, or institutional commitment are unlikely to adequately carry out the project.	10		



Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Project Goals and Evaluation</b>	<b>13</b>		
<p>-Does the proposal demonstrate adequate support and alignment with long-term goals?</p> <p>-Does the proposal sufficiently address how project activities will result in increased retention and completion among Tennessee Promise students?</p> <p>-Does the application demonstrate the capacity to collect, analyze, and report the required data?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u></p> <p>13- The proposed project clearly aligns with the project's desired outcomes (retention, completion) and institution-specific goals. The applying organization demonstrates the intention and infrastructure necessary to collect, analyze, and use data to monitor student progress and determine appropriate interventions. Chosen targets for relevant performance measures are appropriate and reference baseline data.</p> <p>6-The proposal is missing one or more of the following: plan or capacity to collect, analyze, and report necessary data; clear alignment between proposed project activities, desired outcomes (retention, completion), and chosen performance measure targets; evidence that data will be used to improve student outcomes.</p> <p>1-The proposal is lacking sufficient detail and more than one of the following: plan or capacity to collect, analyze, and report necessary data; clear alignment between proposed project activities, desired outcomes (retention, completion), and chosen performance measure targets; evidence that data will be used to improve student outcomes.</p>			

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Sustainability and Scalability</b>	<b>10</b>		
<p>-Does the proposal provide a detailed explanation of how Tennessee Promise Forward grant services and activities will be sustained at the institution beyond the life of the mini-grant?</p> <p>-Does the proposal show evidence of scalability and integrating the project and associated long-term goals into the institutional culture?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u></p> <p>10- Proposal includes a detailed explanation of how Tennessee Promise Forward grant services and activities will be sustained beyond the life of the grant and integrated into the institutional culture.</p> <p>5- Proposal demonstrates the intention for Tennessee Promise Forward grant services and activities to be sustained beyond the life of the grant but it is unclear how the project will be integrated into the institutional culture.</p> <p>1- Proposal does not include sustainability plan.</p>			
<b>Budget</b>	<b>10</b>		
<p>-Are budget requests detailed and justified throughout the narrative?</p> <p>-Are resources aligned with and appropriate to the needs of the proposed project?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u></p> <p>10 – Budget is complete with sufficient justifications and detail listed for each line item.</p> <p>5 – Budget lacks sufficient detail but expenditures seem to be reasonable given the scope of the proposal.</p> <p>1 – Budget is incomplete and/or unreasonable given the scope of the proposal.</p>			

Appendix C- Institutions with No Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grant

**Tennessee Promise Forward Grant**

**Reviewer Scoring Rubric**

**Institutions with No Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grant**

**Applying Institution** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Category** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Project Budget** \_\_\_\_\_

**Funding Recommendation (yes, no, yes with modifications)** \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Project Proposal: <i>Project Description</i></b>	<b>35</b>		
<p>Does the proposal clearly articulate how the project will increase postsecondary retention and completion of Tennessee Promise students?</p> <p>-Does the proposed project design clearly fit within one of the three project categories? Does the proposed project design reflect up-to-date research and/or effective practices?</p> <p>- Will the project effectively serve all Tennessee Promise students on campus?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u>            35-Proposal includes a detailed description of the project, proposed interventions, and how the initiative will increase retention and completion among <u>all</u> Tennessee Promise students. Project is supported by relevant research or promising practice. Project fits within one of the three proposal categories.</p> <p>17-Proposal includes a description of the project and proposed interventions that clearly fit into one of the three proposal categories but may lack detail. The proposal does not clearly articulate how the intervention will lead to increased retention and completion <u>or</u> the project is not supported by relevant research/ practice.</p> <p>1-The proposal is lacking key information about the proposed intervention and any relevant research. The project does not clearly fit within one of the three categories.</p>			

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Project Proposal: <i>Implementation Timeline</i></b>  -Does the proposal include a detailed timeline for implementation?  -Is the proposed timeline feasible and likely to result in successful grant implementation and improved student outcomes?  <u>Scoring Range</u> 15-The proposal includes a detailed implementation timeline that includes key milestones, responsible parties, and anticipated outcomes.  7-The proposal includes a timeline but may lack sufficient detail.  1-It is unclear how the proposed project will be implemented based on the information provided.	15		
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>  -Do the qualifications of the project director/key personnel demonstrate skills needed to successfully carry out the proposed project?  -Does the applying institution commit the resources necessary for the project to be successful?  <u>Scoring Range</u> 15-The institution's resources and key personnel have the capacity to successfully implement the proposed project.  7-The proposal lacks sufficient detail about the institution's resources or the project director's capacity to carry out the project.  1-The proposed leadership, partnerships, or institutional commitment are unlikely to adequately carry out the project.	15		

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Project Goals and Evaluation</b>	<b>15</b>		
<p>-Does the proposal demonstrate adequate support and alignment with long-term goals?</p> <p>-Does the proposal sufficiently address how project activities will result in increased retention and completion among Tennessee Promise students?</p> <p>-Does the application demonstrate the capacity to collect, analyze, and report the required data?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u></p> <p>15- The proposed project clearly aligns with the project's desired outcomes (retention, completion) and institution-specific goals. The applying organization demonstrates the intention and infrastructure necessary to collect, analyze, and use data to monitor student progress and determine appropriate interventions. Chosen targets for relevant performance measures are appropriate and reference baseline data.</p> <p>7-The proposal is missing one or more of the following: plan or capacity to collect, analyze, and report necessary data; clear alignment between proposed project activities, desired outcomes (retention, completion), and chosen performance measure targets; evidence that data will be used to improve student outcomes.</p> <p>1-The proposal is lacking sufficient detail and more than one of the following: plan or capacity to collect, analyze, and report necessary data; clear alignment between proposed project activities, desired outcomes (retention, completion), and chosen performance measure targets; evidence that data will be used to improve student outcomes.</p>			

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<b>Sustainability and Scalability</b>	<b>10</b>		
<p>-Does the proposal provide a detailed explanation of how Tennessee Promise Forward grant services and activities will be sustained at the institution beyond the life of the mini-grant?</p> <p>-Does the proposal show evidence of scalability and integrating the project and associated long-term goals into the institutional culture?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u></p> <p>10- Proposal includes a detailed explanation of how Tennessee Promise Forward grant services and activities will be sustained beyond the life of the grant and integrated into the institutional culture.</p> <p>5- Proposal demonstrates the intention for Tennessee Promise Forward grant services and activities to be sustained beyond the life of the grant but it is unclear how the project will be integrated into the institutional culture.</p> <p>1- Proposal does not include sustainability plan.</p>			
<b>Budget</b>	<b>10</b>		
<p>-Are budget requests detailed and justified throughout the narrative?</p> <p>-Are resources aligned with and appropriate to the needs of the proposed project?</p> <p><u>Scoring Range</u></p> <p>10 – Budget is complete with sufficient justifications and detail listed for each line item.</p> <p>5 – Budget lacks sufficient detail but expenditures seem to be reasonable given the scope of the proposal.</p> <p>1 – Budget is incomplete and/or unreasonable given the scope of the proposal.</p>			

## Appendix D – Budget Line-Item Descriptions

### GRANT BUDGET LINE-ITEM DETAIL

#### **Salaries, Benefits and Taxes**

**Salaries:** Enter compensation, fees, salaries and wages paid to officers, directors, trustees and full-time employees. *Institutions are required to provide 50 percent of all salary and benefit expenditures.* An attached schedule may be required showing client wages or other included in the aggregations.

**Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes:** Enter (a) the institution's contributions to pension plans and to employee benefit programs such as health, life and disability insurance; and (b) the institution's portion of payroll taxes such as social security and Medicare taxes and unemployment and workers' compensation insurance. An attached schedule may be required showing client benefits and taxes or other included in the aggregations.

#### **Professional Fees, Grants and Awards**

**Professional Fees:** Enter the institution's fees and stipends to outside professionals, speakers, consultants, personal-service contractors and part-time personal. (A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)

**Grants and Awards:** Enter the institution's awards, grants, subsidies and other pass-through expenditures to individuals, speakers, consultants, and to other institutions, including travel and equipment allowances outside the institution. This classification includes items used in direct support of this initiative. (A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)

#### **Supplies, Telephone, Postage & Shipping, Occupancy, Equipment Rental & Maintenance, Printing & Publications**

**Telephone:** Enter the institution's expenses for telephone, cellular phones, beepers, telegram, FAX, E-mail, telephone equipment maintenance and other related expenses used exclusively for this grant initiative.

**Postage and Shipping:** Enter the institution's expenses for postage, messenger services, overnight delivery, outside mailing service fees, freight and trucking and maintenance of delivery and shipping vehicles.

**Occupancy:** Not Applicable.

**Equipment Rental and Maintenance:** Enter the institution's expenses for renting and maintaining computers, copiers, postage meters and other office equipment used exclusively for this grant initiative.

**Printing and Publications:** Enter the institution's expenses for producing printed materials (not including posters, advertising and other marketing materials), purchasing books and publications and buying subscriptions to publications for the direct use of the institution. (Printed materials in support of conferences and meetings should be reported as a meeting and conference expense (Line 12), and printed materials and books purchased specifically for individuals should be reported as grant and award items (Line 14.)

**Food:** Enter the institution's expenses for food. Food may only be purchased if doing so is necessary to accomplish legitimate meeting or event business.

**Other supplies:** Enter any other expenses the institution anticipates here, including any incentives provided to students.

### **Travel, Conferences & Meetings**

**Travel:** Enter the institution's expenses for faculty and staff travel, including transportation, meals and lodging and per diem payments.

**Conference and Meetings:** Enter the institution's expenses for conducting or attending meetings, conferences and conventions. Include rental of facilities, printed materials and registration fees (but not travel).

### **Other Non-Personnel**

Enter the institution's allowable expenses for advertising, the institution's and employees' membership dues in associations and professional societies and licenses, permits, registrations and testing fees. (A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)

### **Reimbursable Capital Purchases**

Enter the institution's purchases of fixed assets and other purchases with a minimum life expectancy of one year and purchases exceeding \$5,000 for an individual item or \$5,000 for a group of items. (A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)



## Appendix E – Application Packet

### Tennessee Higher Education Commission Tennessee Promise Forward Grant COVER PAGE

Applying Organization:			
Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grantee (Yes/No):			
Designated Fiscal Agent for this Organization:			
Project Category:			
Project Title:			
Program Director:			
Contact Name:			
Title:			
Address:			
Telephone:		Fax:	
E-Mail:			
Amount of funding Requested			\$
Anticipated Number of Tennessee Promise Students to Be Served			

Certification by Authorized Official of the Designated Fiscal Agent:  
The designee certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the information in this application is correct and that the filing of this application is duly authorized by the applicant organization specified above.

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Name and Title of Authorized Official of Designated Fiscal Agent

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Signature of Authorized Official of Designated Fiscal Agent

---

Date

**Section 1: Project Abstract**

Supply a project summary/ abstract no longer than half a page. This will be used to describe funded proposals in publications and on THEC's website.

**Note:** The Project Abstract does not count toward the page limit.

## **Section 2: Project Proposal**

Provide a detailed description of the project. Describe how the proposed activities will lead to desired outcomes, including a rationale or research supporting said approach.

### Section 3: Project Timeline

Complete the timeline below outlining key grant milestones and deliverables with appropriate deadlines. Note: the timeline does not count towards the page limit.

Date	Deliverable	Comments (if applicable)

**Section 4: Implementation of a Prior Tennessee Promise Forward Grant**

Provide a detailed description of the prior project, grant outcomes achieved, and how the proposed project will expand upon previous work. Skip this section if you did not previously administer a Tennessee Promise Forward grant.

## **Section 5: Organizational Capacity**

Provide an overview of the applying institution's capacity to successfully carry out the proposed project and the resources available to support implementation.

Note: Letters of commitment to collaboration and curriculum vitae do not count toward the page limit. Include these forms as an attachment at the end of the application packet.

**Section 6: Project Goals and Evaluation**

Provide a narrative outlining how the Tennessee Promise Forward activities and deliverables support the overarching goal of increasing retention and completion among Tennessee Promise students. Proposals must also provide an evaluation plan.

Complete the following table. Include a target for each performance indicator that will be addressed through the proposed project. Baseline data should reflect the most recent class of Tennessee Promise students or most recent class of first-time, full-time students. Please indicate the population included and the rationale. Applicants may include additional project-specific indicators..

Performance Indicator	Baseline Data (most recent year available)		Target	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>EXAMPLE – 6-year graduation rate</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>65%</i>
Total Tennessee Promise Student Population				
Students enrolled in or requiring learning support math				
Students enrolled in or requiring learning support English				
Students completing learning support math				
Students completing learning support English				
Students earning 12 or more credit hours per semester				
Students earning 15 or more credit hours per semester				
Students completing a FAFSA by the February 15 deadline				
Fall to Spring retention rate				
First to second year retention rate				
Graduation rate (long-term goal)				



**Section 7: Sustainability and Scalability**

Applicants must provide a detailed explanation of how the Tennessee Promise Forward project elements will be sustained and scaled beyond the life of the grant.

## Section 8: Project Budget

GRANT BUDGET				
<b>Tennessee Promise Forward</b>				
<b>The grant budget line-item amounts below shall be applicable only to expenses incurred during the following applicable period:</b> <b>BEGIN: September 15, 2016      END: June 1, 2018</b>				
<b>POLICY 03 Object Line-item Reference</b>	<b>EXPENSE OBJECT LINE-ITEM CATEGORY <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>GRANT CONTRACT</b>	<b>GRANTEE PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>
1, 2	Salaries, Benefits & Taxes			
4, 15	Professional Fee, Grant & Award <sup>2</sup>			
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	Supplies, Telephone, Postage & Shipping, Occupancy, Equipment Rental & Maintenance, Printing & Publications			
11, 12	Travel, Conferences & Meetings			
13	Interest <sup>2</sup>			
14	Insurance			
16	Specific Assistance To Individuals			
17	Depreciation <sup>2</sup>			
18	Other Non-Personnel <sup>2</sup>			
20	Capital Purchase <sup>2</sup>			
22	Indirect Cost			
24	In-Kind Expense			
25	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			

<sup>1</sup> Each expense object line-item shall be defined by the Department of Finance and Administration Policy 03, *Uniform Reporting Requirements and Cost Allocation Plans for Subrecipients of Federal and State Grant Monies, Appendix A*. (posted on the Internet at: [www.state.tn.us/finance/act/documents/policy3.pdf](http://www.state.tn.us/finance/act/documents/policy3.pdf)).

<sup>2</sup> Applicable detail follows this page if line-item is funded.

**GRANT BUDGET LINE-ITEM DETAIL:**

*All food and incentive related expenses must be detailed in separate line items under the supplies category.*

<b>Salaries, Benefits &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Amount</b>

<b>Professional Fee, Grant &amp; Award</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Amount</b>

<b>Supplies, Telephone, Postage &amp; Shipping, Occupancy, Equipment Rental &amp; Maintenance, Printing &amp; Publications</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Amount</b>

<b>Travel, Conferences &amp; Meetings</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Amount</b>

<b>Other Non-Personnel</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Amount</b>

<b>Capital Purchase</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Amount</b>

## **Section 9: Budget Narrative**